

Northampton Disabled People's Forum

on Friday, 5 December 2014 at 10:00 am until not later than 12:00 pm

in The Holding Room, The Guildhall, St. Giles Square, Northampton, NN1 1DE

Agenda

1. **Welcomes, introductions and apologies**
2. **Minutes and Matters arising**
3. **Disabled Go - Dean Eales**
4. **Changing Minds - Lee Johnson (NHFT)**
5. **Action Plans**
6. **Community Information Exchange**
7. **Items for Next and Future Meetings**
NBC Budget Consultation – Cllr Bottwood
8. **Date of the Next Meeting**

Map and directions at: www.northampton.gov.uk/guildhall

For more information about this meeting please contact:
Alice Morgan, Community Development Officer



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Tel: 01604 837795



More information about the Forum generally is at: www.northampton.gov.uk/forums



Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/NorthamptonDisabledPeoplesForum?ref=hl>

Please note that this Forum is supported and funded by Northampton Borough Council. The Forum may work in partnership and collaboration with other community groups, councils and local services from time to time. The views expressed and decisions taken by the Forum are not necessarily those of Northampton Borough Council.



NORTHAMPTON
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Code of Conduct for the Forums

This Code of Conduct sets out the standards that the Forums expect of its members. It aims to provide members with an effective ethical framework in which to do business. It is not intended to be exhaustive, or to cover every eventuality, but sets out some common sense requirements to enable the forums to function smoothly and successfully.

It is the responsibility of the Chair to encourage and enable input from forum members, to ensure all voices are heard.

1. Meeting Etiquette

As an attendee you must comply with the following requirements and any others that may be stated from time to time:

- 1.1** Contribute positively to discussions concerning the issues of the meeting
- 1.2** Be friendly, polite, courteous and respectful at all times to fellow members, and others present
- 1.3** Not insult, abuse or use offensive language or behaviour
- 1.4** Comply with Northampton Borough Councils Equal Opportunities Policy
- 1.5** Demonstrate actively that you are interested in and care about the issue that you are discussing and want to make a positive difference
- 1.6** Show respect for buildings, facilities and equipment being used
- 1.7** Speak only through the Chairman of the meeting and not interrupt, heckle, make distracting noises or gestures
- 1.8** Speak clearly into any microphone provided and comply with any instructions given about its use

2. Being Objective

- 2.1** Your own experience and views should inform, but not dominate or dictate how you participate.
- 2.2** If you have a specific issue with regards to a service matter to raise these can be discussed with a member of staff at the end of the each meeting or you can ask for the appropriate officer details. Meetings attended by other residents are not the place to raise any issues of this nature.
- 2.3** Be Fair
- 2.4** You must have and show respect for the people you deal with, and take their circumstances and personal differences into account. This is about putting equality into practice. The key is simply to respect differences fairly, so that you do not exclude anyone, or treat anyone inappropriately or unfairly because of their particular circumstances.

Breaching the Code of Conduct

If any person's behaviour breaches this Code of Conduct, they will be required to leave the meeting and vacate the premises where it is being held. They will not be permitted to attend future meetings unless they provide satisfactory evidence to Northampton Borough Council that they will comply with the Code – e.g. a letter of apology.

If you would like further information or if you would like to discuss the Code of Conduct please contact Vicki Rockall, Partnerships and Communities Manager at vrockall@northampton.gov.uk or on 01604 837074

Northampton Borough Council - Northampton Disabled People's Forum

Tuesday, 23 September 2014

Present: Cllr Larratt (Chair), Martin De Rosario (Community co-chair), Eira Bassett (Individual), Barbara Barber (Individual), Larry Barber (Individual), Norman Adams (Individual), Cllr Mennell (NBC), Suzanne McBride (NBC), Vicki Rockall (NBC), Alice Morgan (NBC)*

*took minutes

1. WELCOMES, INTRODUCTIONS AND APOLOGIES

Peter Apologies received by Keith Goodwin (Northampton Door to Door Service), Graham Wilson (Northamptonshire Sport), Peter Mains (Northampton Polio Fellowship), Carl Weininger (Northampton Polio Fellowship) and Simon Burgess (Independent).

Cllr Larratt gave his apologies for having to leave the meeting early, due to another meeting. MDR chaired the meeting in his absence.

2. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING

Eira Bassett's name spelt wrong – AM to amend. Otherwise, minutes of the last meeting were agreed as a true record.

3. DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS - NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

Suzanne McBride gave an overview of DFG's and the applications received. The service has seen lots of Disabled Facilities Grants enquiries, an average of 27 new enquiries every month and other enquiries on top of this. This financial year, from April 1st up to 17th September, there has been a high volume of enquiries - over 409 enquiries. It must be remembered that this work isn't always spread evenly through the year, as this is dependent on the enquiries made.

There are two parts to DFG's – firstly for private sector housing, and secondly for council tenants. One team makes the adaptations to enable individuals to stay in their own home, although there are two separate pots for private/council housing. From January, the service for Council tenants will be part of Northamptonshire Partnership Homes (ALMO). For Council houses going through the process of the Decent Homes Standard, it may be that a surveyor will discover that an adaptation is needed in someone's home, and as a result hopefully everyone's needs will be met.

NA suggested that spending in the first quarter this year was substantially down compared to last year, and shared concerns that next year's budget may be reduced if the spend this year is under budget. SM explained that the actual spend in the first quarter of last year was unusually high, and this year has been unusually low. In spring, the waiting lists for assessments were getting past the 8 week target.

There is a target of 8 weeks for enquiry to assessment, and from there the team decide on next steps and what work is to be done – if the work required is complicated and requires planning permission, this can take a longer for the work to be completed. As a result of the backlog, an additional OT was brought in to do the additional assessments, and there were a large number of inspections during the summer months. NBC has one qualified OT. Occupational Therapy is not a responsibility of NBC, but NBC are paying for this service to ensure needs are met.

On the topic of waiting times, RS felt that the promised waiting times need to be more realistic and clear. SM asked that if anyone has experienced longer waiting times than the target, or have not had the experience expected, please let us know.

SM explained that this year there is a larger budget than last year and this may not all be spent looking at the assessments and applications coming in by the end of the second quarter. The amount spent is all dependent on what is required. SM explained to the forum that there will be national changes to DFGs, and NBC will be working with NCC in a more partnership approach.

An issue was raised regarding the availability of DFG forms. Although these are not on display racks, SM explained that when the public come into the one stop shop, they are expected to see a customer services advisor who will be able to help and provide a form. VR said that issues with the availability of forms are to do with the corporate policy and should be directed to the Head of Customer and Cultural services Marion Goodman. **ACTION: AM to pass comments on.**

NB discussed the change in benefits and introduction of means testing for adaptations to be made to the home. This is part of the national changes through the welfare reform. NB felt that the scrutiny committee that looked at the effects of the welfare reform did not touch upon DFGs. SM advised that the Council are looking at giving people better advice in circumstances where they do not qualify through the means testing – there are other sources of help that individuals can be sign posted to, such as help for ex-forces/widows of forces, equity release, and other charities.

4. ACCESSIBLE BRITAIN CHALLENGE

The Accessible Britain Challenge representatives were not present. This item will be put back to a later meeting.

5. ACTION PLAN UPDATE

VR commented that once we have heard from the Accessible Britain challenge, it may be that the forum would like to develop an action plan from this.

6. COMMUNITY INFORMATION EXCHANGE

None

7. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING

Disabled Go

8. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

It was discussed that it may be better for meetings to be changed to day time in order to see if attendance improves. It was agreed that the date and time of the next meeting will be circulated once agreed with Cllr Larratt.

The meeting concluded at 18:45pm

Forum Action Plan						
Chair:	Cllr. Larratt and Martin De Rosario		Responsible Forum:	Disabled People's Forum		
Outcomes identified within the Corporate Plan:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Empowered local communities with a greater capacity to become involved in community life • Promote integration and cohesion • Appropriate support provided to those in most need • Services are fair, accessible and responsive to individual needs residents and customers feel informed and engaged in service quality and design • Future developments informed by the views of local people • Delivery of events to celebrate and enjoy the Town's heritage and culture 					
Objectives:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify issues of importance to disabled people who live or work in the Borough, research/discuss issues and decide on outcomes to achieve • Promote and sustain effective communication between NBC and disabled people living or working in the Borough. • Work towards equality of access by disabled people to services, including accessible formats, removing barriers, promoting dialogue and identifying specific requirements. 					
Actions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promoting partnership working by statutory and voluntary sector organisations, and Disabled People's groups and communities 					
Action	Owner	Activity (intelligence led)	Timescale	Cost	Measure	Last Updated
Improve attendance at forum, bringing different groups together to build upon the forum. Including service providers as well as service users.	All Officers – VR & AM	Officers working on Communications Plan to raise the profile of the forum Flyers distributed to community organisations, and key organisations in the borough invited. All forum members to recommend service providers and organisations they believe would be beneficial to be at the forum at the next meeting.	Ongoing	Nil	% increase at forum	May 14